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**H2GSDERS** UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT 1 SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK 2 3 UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, 4 15 CR 643 (PKC) V. 5 DEREK GALANIS, 6 Defendant. -----x 7 8 New York, N.Y. February 16, 2017 9 2:00 p.m. 10 Before: 11 HON. P. KEVIN CASTEL, 12 District Judge 13 14 **APPEARANCES** 15 PREET BHARARA United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York 16 AIMEE HECTOR 17 REBECCA G. MERMELSTEIN BRIAN R. BLAIS 18 Assistant United States Attorneys 19 LAW OFFICE OF ANTHONY J. BRASS Attorney for Defendant 20 BY: ANTHONY J. BRASS 21 ALSO PRESENT: Shannon Bieniek, FBI Agent 22 23 24 25

1 (Case called) MS. HECTOR: Good afternoon, your Honor. 2 3 Hector, Rebecca Mermelstein, Brian Blais for the government. With us is Shannon Bieniek from the FBI. 4 5 THE COURT: Good afternoon to you all. For the defendant. 6 7 MR. BRASS: Good afternoon, your Honor. Tony Brass 8 appearing with Derek Galanis, who appears in custody. 9 THE COURT: Good afternoon, Mr. Brass. 10 afternoon, Mr. Galanis. 11 Mr. Brass, what I propose to do is go through the 12 materials that I have, and the question will be whether I have 13 everything I should have. I have a presentence report, 14 recommendation, and addendum that was revised as of January 31, 15 2017, I have a sentencing memorandum on behalf of Mr. Galanis that was filed on February 2, and I have the government's 16 17 sentencing memorandum dated February 9, 2017. I also have a 18 letter from the government in which they ask to defer on restitution. 19 20 Do I have everything I should have on the subject of 21 sentencing? 22 MR. BRASS: Yes, your Honor. 23 THE COURT: Ms. Hector?

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THE COURT: Has the defendant read, reviewed, and

MS. HECTOR: Yes, your Honor.

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discussed with you the presentence report, recommendation, and 1 addendum? 2 3 MR. BRASS: Yes. THE COURT: 4 Does the defendant have any objections to 5 the facts set forth in the presentence report? 6 THE DEFENDANT: None. 7 THE COURT: Does the defendant have any objections to the guideline calculation set forth in the presentence report? 8 9 MR. BRASS: No, your Honor. 10 THE COURT: Does the government have any objections to 11 the facts set forth in the presentence report? MS. HECTOR: No, your Honor. 12 13 THE COURT: Does the government have any objections to 14 the guideline calculation? 15 MS. HECTOR: No, we do not. THE COURT: I adopt as my findings of fact the facts 16 17 set forth in the presentence report and further adopt as my quideline calculation the guideline calculation set forth in 18 19 the presentence report. 20 Defendant is at total offense level 28, criminal 21 history category III, guideline range of 97 to 121 months. 22 I'll now give Mr. Brass an opportunity to speak on

Your Honor, the factual disagreements that we have

MR. BRASS: Thank you, your Honor.

behalf of Mr. Galanis.

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with the government in the sentencing memorandum I am not going to address today. I think we all generally agree with the picture of Mr. Galanis' case.

Mr. Galanis was released from federal prison on his prior conviction, went home and to the only place he had, home with his father at that point. I don't want anything I say to confuse what I mean. Mr. Galanis is a full-grown man. He is an adult and responsible for himself. But the way his life has worked out, he ended up being someone who had very few places to go other than home, where he lived with John Galanis and Jason Galanis. I will dance circles around the topic of whether I am blaming John Galanis for the evils of Derek Galanis, but I am, and that will come forth in what I am trying to say today.

I am not going to repeat what I said in my sentencing memorandum, but I will let the court know, when I met Mr. Derek Galanis -- I'll refer to him as Derek only because everyone has the same last name.

THE COURT: That's fine.

MR. BRASS: Thank you.

When I met Derek, the only thing he wanted was to protect his brother Jared. He wanted nothing for himself. He didn't ask me to get any deal. He didn't ask me to put up a defense. He didn't ask me how much evidence the government had so that he could get away with what he had done. He

acknowledged immediately what he had done and said, How do I protect Jared? That was all he wanted.

I have represented many, many people. I have never had anyone do that, to lay themselves down for someone they cared about. I think the court recently acknowledged that Jared Galanis is less culpable than the other people involved in this case. I am not saying he was not culpable and didn't deserve what he got, but the level of culpability was significantly less. That's the same reason that Derek was always ready to put himself in front of what was coming to Jared.

The primary threat against Jared, John and Jason.

This case was on a super highway to trial. Your Honor set the trial date very, very quickly, and then it was moved a little bit, but only just so. Derek saw that trial coming, saw himself sitting next to Jared at a jury trial in this case, and couldn't bear it. All we ever discussed was how to stop that from happening to Jared.

To that end, at one point Derek met with the government. We met via teleconference, flew to San Diego, and we had extensive meetings with the government where he debriefed about this case. I am not making a 5K type cooperation type argument, but what was touching about that was that he went in and he laid himself out as much as his brother Jason and his father John, and that wasn't easy. That was a

brutal experience for him. He went in also knowing that he would have to say everything he had about his brother Jared. But that was a frontier, even committing to that situation, it was a frontier he wouldn't cross, knowing that he was in a situation where at least at the time, he had no reason to not believe he was going to get credit for that debrief. When asked questions about Jared, he just couldn't do it.

Now, I know how that works.

THE COURT: You have to explain that a little bit better for me. What do you mean he just couldn't do it? I don't understand that.

MR. BRASS: He simply couldn't provide information about Jared's involvement. He couldn't put himself in a situation where he would be a witness against Jared. Jared has culpability. He couldn't quantify that, so he could not answer those questions, making the debrief not successful, making it so that he knew he would get no credit for cooperating. He would basically render himself useless as a witness by not having the willingness to answer those questions. He knew because I told him repeatedly and he couldn't do it, but the spirit with which he approached that endeavor regarding John and Jason was also not easy.

My point being that, for someone like Derek to go into that, the painful exercise of laying out his brother and father, was challenging and trying for him. It was just a

fool's hope that the government wouldn't have a lot of questions about Jared. But the fact is even when he was in a situation to help himself, he couldn't do it over his brother, because the family dynamic here is so significant.

That is really the crux of the sentencing memorandum. This is a guy who goes home to a master con man of a father. John is a master manipulator and that manipulated Derek. The words in the sentencing memorandum I wrote, that Derek joined this conspiracy by introducing Shahini into the mix without knowing that it was a criminal enterprise. When he first joined, he didn't know it was a criminal enterprise. That is from the presentence report. I didn't make that up and it is not my opinion. The presentence report says it as a result of reviewing the government's evidence.

He might have done anything to be in the family business. He was an outcast, and anyone who has father-son issues is familiar with people who do understand the power of that. He joined this business and was taken advantage of because he had something that John and Jason needed, which was a foreign national that he could trust. John and Jason don't have anyone they can trust, but Derek did. Derek knew this man and was in that sort of relationship.

So in order to win his father's favor, he introduced Shahini to Jason and John, not at that point understanding exactly what was going on. He learned soon thereafter, and

there is no question he stuck to it. I am not telling the court that he was wide-eyed and innocent when he participated in this conspiracy. He knew what was going on soon thereafter, but not at first. Once he was in, he was in. He was embraced by his family, part of the family business now, and almost everything he did involved keeping Shahini quiet, keeping Shahini involved, because his father and his brother needed him.

For that reason, I see his culpability less. Maybe I am just moved by the nobility of his willingness to stand in front of his brother as a guard, even putting himself at risk of a lengthy prison sentence, which now is coming. There will be no 5K argument. There will be no message from anyone on that, and that's appropriate. But what I am saying is that Derek's heart is in the right place now. He did this because he was embraced by his family maybe for the first time and it was only because they needed him. They needed an asset that he had, and there was no way John and Jason weren't going to make use of that.

So how much of a chance did Derek stand before a master manipulating con man and his other parent, who likewise is a master manipulating con man? Not much. The last thing Derek said to me before walking in here is, I think everyone looks at me like I'm just a thug and I'm just a family thug. I grant Derek that his appearance has that, but what really

happened here, the human story is that he was trying to protect his little brother entirely through this case and always willing to accept responsibility from the moment I met him, which is right after the indictment.

I urge the court to just take those human factors into account. I realize under 3553(a), I am not hitting those factors strongly because I can't. Derek is culpable and acknowledges that.

THE COURT: Tell me a little bit more about the period from the time of release in August 2008 until the conspiracy gets in full swing by the spring of 2010. What was he doing? Where was he? What was he doing?

MR. BRASS: He became a martial arts instructor, and I actually have letters and things. I didn't think that they would be as interesting to the court on this point, but he was an instructor for children in martial arts, very much enjoyed doing that work. He made very, very little money.

THE COURT: He was living with John and Jason, did you say, or John and Jared?

MR. BRASS: He was living with John.

THE COURT: He was living with John?

MR. BRASS: Correct. Jason at the time was living in the most Liberace-esque ostentatious mansion one could imagine while Derek was living with his dad driving an early '90s Ford Mustang.

| 1  | THE COURT: Now, tell me about Derek's take on this          |
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| 2  | overall transaction or series of transactions, this scheme. |
| 3  | MR. BRASS: Derek's take on the scheme, your Honor, is       |
| 4  | that this master plan was being                             |
| 5  | THE COURT: No, no. I mean following the money. What         |
| 6  | did he get out of it?                                       |
| 7  | MR. BRASS: His father's approval for a moment.              |
| 8  | THE COURT: Financially, what did he get out of it?          |
| 9  | MR. BRASS: There was a period where he received             |
| 10 | \$13,000 a month as a salary, but that period was only for  |
| 11 | several months.   |
| 12 | THE COURT: Salary from whom?                                |
| 13 | MR. BRASS: From his father. So he had a successful          |
| 14 | person  |
| 15 | THE COURT: When was that?                                   |
| 16 | MR. BRASS: I'm sorry, your Honor. I don't know.             |
| 17 | THE COURT: Was it for a year? Was it two years?             |
| 18 | MR. BRASS: Approximately one year.                          |
| 19 | THE COURT: Right. Go ahead.                                 |
| 20 | MR. BRASS: I would submit it, your Honor.                   |
| 21 | THE COURT: Pardon me?                                       |
| 22 | MR. BRASS: With that, I would submit, unless your           |
| 23 | Honor has any other questions.                              |
| 24 | THE COURT: No, that's fine.                                 |
| 25 | Mr. Galanis, this is your opportunity to speak, to          |

address the court directly, to bring to my attention any facts or circumstances that you believe I should take account of. If there is anything you wish to say, this is the time.

THE DEFENDANT: Your Honor, the only thing I want to say is I take full responsibility for my actions and that's it.

THE COURT: Thank you very much.

Ms. Hector.

MS. HECTOR: Yes, your Honor.

First let me begin by just addressing this point of what Mr. Galanis, Mr. Derek Galanis' understanding was at the time he introduced Shahini into this conspiracy. The argument we make in the papers is very much tied to the e-mail correspondence that this individual had with Mr. Shahini at the outset of bringing him into the scheme, I think it is five days after the e-mail saying, We need a foreign nominee. That is where you come in, my friend.

There is a subsequent e-mail where Mr. Shahini indicates his awareness that he's become magically rich basically because he's been granted these shares that he understands he is not a true beneficiary of, but is purely serving as a straw man, in essence. Mr. Galanis writes back something along the lines of, If this works out, we all may be. If not, well, I don't want to think about that.

I think that e-mail in and of itself demonstrates

Mr. Galanis' knowledge that what they were engaging in at this

point was a criminal endeavor and that they were fearsome that if law enforcement were to uncover this scheme, well, the consequences could be dire. If not, they could be rich men.

So I think that stands in stark contrast to the argument that is being presented in the papers and here, that he was somehow unaware of the PSR notes that Shahini had been introduced to Jacob by Derek Galanis at an earlier point. But Derek Galanis knew Shahini for years, and I believe he did introduce Shahini to Jason Galanis at some earlier point as well. But with respect to his introduction to this scheme, it was for the purpose of serving a criminal purpose, and that was the purpose of serving as the foreign nominee. I think that is clear from the record.

With respect to Mr. Galanis' attempted cooperation —
this wasn't brought up in the papers, obviously it was brought
up here today — Mr. Galanis did seek to proffer with the
government and he did meet with the government via video
teleconference on several occasions. The government credited
some of the things he said, but we did not credit many of the
other things he said, particularly around the issue of Jared
Galanis. It was Mr. Derek Galanis that cut off those proffers,
not the government. He decided to cease that process and stop
meeting with the government and stop endeavoring to potentially
cooperate in this case.

So for both the fact that we didn't fully credit his

statements and for the fact that he cut off that process and never actually became a cooperator and never provided information that the government was able to use in any capacity in the investigation or the trial, he deserves no credit for doing that.

THE COURT: Your account of what transpired is not materially different than Mr. Brass' account of what transpired.

MS. HECTOR: I am just confirming for your Honor what happened.

THE COURT: Thank you.

MS. HECTOR: I think one of the most important things for your Honor to consider when considering Derek Galanis and the sentence that he should receive is the fact that he chose to become involved in this scheme knowing full well what he was entering. He had a history of a prior conviction, so he was not someone who was un-equated with the consequences of engaging in criminal activity. He was well aware of his father's history and his brother's history at that point. He had grown up in affluent circumstances, and yes, of course, the fact that his father had been in prison for much of his childhood certainly had an impact on him. But one could also argue that it should have impacted him in a way to make decisions that wouldn't bring him down that same path.

He was an adult. He had education. He had the

ability to do something different with his life. Nonetheless, he chose to become involved in a scheme with his criminal family. That was his choice and he made that choice with other options.

So he stands before your Honor today having been someone who has a criminal past, who the prior sentence that he served of seven years did not serve to adequately deter him from continuing to engage in criminal conduct, and who is deserving of a significant sentence not only to specifically deter him from engaging in criminal conduct in the future, but also for a general deterrence impact.

This crime impacted many people. Your Honor is well aware of the financial hardships suffered by the people who lost money in this scheme. Yes, Mr. Derek Galanis did not receive the kind of proceeds that some of the other people involved in the scheme received, but he did receive a monthly stipend from the family during this period of time in partial compensation for his willingness to perform a role.

He had communications with Mr. Shahini and with Jason Galanis about Mr. Shahini's interest in continuing to serve such a role in the future. His communication --

THE COURT: Say that one again.

MS. HECTOR: He had communications with Jason Galanis indicating that Mr. Shahini was happy to be serving the role he did and hoped to be included in the future. So there was

contemplation of future criminal endeavors as well.

We submit, your Honor, that this defendant is deserving of a significant sentence and one within the guidelines would be appropriate in this case.

THE COURT: Thank you.

This is the court's statement of reasons for the sentence to be imposed on Derek Galanis. I have considered all the materials I referenced at the outset. I have considered the very thoughtful comments of Mr. Brass and Ms. Hector and the brief statement by Derek Galanis, considering all the factors under Section 3553(a).

The record will reflect that I presided at the trial of Gary Hirst and I have presided at the sentencings of Jason Galanis and Jared Galanis and have, in connection with this sentencing today, also reviewed the sentencing materials related to John Galanis.

The defendant was a knowing participant in a scheme to defraud. He played an important role in being the person to whom Ymer Shahini was introduced and brought on board and managed during the conspiracy. It is not clear to me from this record that Derek Galanis, I don't think he was excluded from information necessary to make the conspiracy operate, but he was nothing like a co-architect or participant in the brain trust that brought this scheme about. It seems to me that he was somewhat on a need-to-know basis and a willing participant,

enthusiastic participant.

In presiding over criminal cases, there are a lot of reasons why people participate in criminal conspiracies. Money is one of them, but it is not always the only one. It is perhaps somewhat unusual that a significant motivation may be family approval, but it is not unheard of, and indeed that's a common reason in organized crime cases why people commit crimes, to curry favor, to have an enhanced stature; not because they are going to get anything out of it, but it gives them credibility with people who they want credibility with.

I accept that as a reason, and when I say accept it as a reason, I don't excuse it as a reason. Listen, we could bring in teams of sociologists and psychiatrists in every criminal case to get to the root cause of what causes someone to engage in criminal activity. The fact of the matter is, as an adult, it was a knowing decision by Derek Galanis.

It's a crime in which there are at least 60 victims. There is a stipulated loss from the offense of between 25 and \$65 million. One of the elephants in the room and the reason why the guidelines are what they are is Derek Galanis was convicted of conspiracy to distribute and possess with intent to distribute ecstasy and received an 108-month prison term going back to October -- well, I guess he was sentenced December of 2003, about 13 years ago, and was arrested in October of 2001.

There he was involved in an actual manufacturing operation at a warehouse with a partner, and it was a rather serious operation. Agents discovered a clandestine laboratory accessible through a bookcase which was opened with a hidden latch, and agents recovered 20,000 ectasy tablets and enough chemicals to produce 159 kilograms of ectasy. So this was a very serious crime of which he was convicted. Then finally, he got his freedom, and it was not long before he returned to criminal activity. I can't imagine what it's like to have grown up in the family that Derek Galanis grew up in, with a father who was a serious criminal, who gave the family a privileged lifestyle, which was supported in part by criminal activity.

Now, Mr. Galanis has self-diagnosed himself as having bipolar disorder. At least I guess his primary care physician has gone along with the diagnosis, Dr. Gary Ross, but he's never received a prescription for bipolar disorder. It is not clear to me to what extent Dr. Ross is qualified to make that diagnosis. He does receive Xanax, and it doesn't surprise me at all to read that he has anxiety and depression.

Part of what troubles me in the case of Derek Galanis is that he had a pretty good academic background. He has a bachelor of arts in history from Cal State at San Marcos. He attended the University of Reading in London to study finance. He also attended for a period of time something called the

New York School of Finance in Lower Manhattan. I can't give
Mr. Galanis the credit for simply not understanding the ways of
finance and not understanding the nature and consequences of
his acts or the extent to which they were wrong.

He had formed a business in Kosovo with Dennis Alba selling prepaid cards to access pornography on the Internet. I say this not because of the nature of the business, but to show that there was some sophistication. He also was involved in a business that functioned as a third-party limited liability insurance company or broker for AIG and sought to establish a market at the end of the Kosovo war in June of 1999. Derek Galanis was certainly smart enough to know better.

I think in a way, even as the government put it, the monies that were paid by John Galanis to Derek Galanis would, in the common parlance, make him a non-equity partner in this enterprise, a salaried employee in this enterprise, albeit a well paid one. But as even the government put it, the money was in part, maybe in large part, to compensate him for his cooperation in the criminal enterprise, but there may have been other familial reasons, including the fact that John Galanis is all of a sudden flesh again and can pay out the money.

I must say, in so many cases, I find it very difficult to fashion the right sentence and often walk away hoping that I've done my best, but knowing that this is a very imperfect exercise. But based on my consideration of the sentencing

guidelines, policy statements, official commentary of the United States Sentencing Commission, recognizing that I am not obligated to sentence within the guidelines, that I have various discretion, I conclude that a sentence of 72 months' imprisonment, three years' supervised release, waiver of the fine based on both limited assets, and a serious restitution and forfeiture obligation, and an imposition of a \$200 special assessment is sufficient but not greater than necessary to achieve the purposes of Section 3553(a).

Does the defendant or his counsel have any objection to the court's proposed sentence or to the statement of reasons for that sentence?

MR. BRASS: None, your Honor. Thank you.

THE COURT: Same question for the government.

MS. HECTOR: No, your Honor.

THE COURT: If the defendant will please stand and I'll impose sentence.

Derek Galanis, it is the judgment of this court that you're hereby remanded to the custody of the United States

Bureau of Prisons for 72 months. Following release from imprisonment you shall be placed on supervised release for a period of three years. I should note that the sentence of 72 months is on Count Two, with a sentence of 60 months on Count One to run concurrently.

On supervised release the following terms and

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conditions apply: You shall not commit another federal, state or local crime, nor illegally possess a controlled substance, nor possess a firearm or destructive device. The mandatory drug-testing condition is suspended due to imposition of a special condition requiring drug treatment and testing. You shall cooperate in the collection of DNA as directed.

The standard conditions of supervision 1 through 13 are imposed with the following special conditions: You shall participate in outpatient treatment programs for drug addiction and also outpatient mental health treatment programs as directed by the probation office, which programs may include testing to determine whether you've reverted to using drugs or alcohol. You shall contribute to the cost of services rendered based on your ability to pay and the availability of third-party payments. The court authorizes the release of evaluations and reports, including the presentence investigation report, to the healthcare provider. As part of the mental health treatment program, you shall take any prescribed medications, unless otherwise instructed by the healthcare provider. You shall submit your person, residence, place of business, any property, computer, electronic communications, data storage devices, and other media under your control to a search on the basis that the probation officer has reasonable suspicion that contraband or evidence of a violation of the conditions of release may be found.

search must be conducted at a reasonable time and in a 1 2 reasonable manner. Failure to submit to a search may be 3 grounds for revocation. You shall inform any other residents 4 that the premises may be subject to search pursuant to this 5 condition. You shall refrain from engaging in any legal or financial transactions, be it directly or in an advisory 6 7 capacity, involving his family members, including his parents and siblings, and his siblings' spouses and their children. 8 9 You shall report to the nearest probation office within 10 72 hours of release of custody. It is ordered that you shall 11 pay the United States a special assessment of \$200, which shall 12 be due immediately. An order of restitution will be entered 13 within 90 days, with the government's submission due 30 days 14 hence. I believe that is the date I said yesterday, is that 15 correct? 16 MS. HECTOR: Yes, your Honor. 17 Is there a specific date? THE COURT: 18 MS. HECTOR: There are. The government's brief is due March 15, the defense the 31st, and the reply April 7. 19 20 THE COURT: That's the schedule that applies here. 21 The defendant shall forfeit all right, title, and 22 interest to the proceeds of the crime, including a sum of money 23 equal to \$19,038,650.53, representing property, real and

traceable to the commission of the offenses alleged in Counts

personal, that constitutes or is derived from the proceeds

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One and Two. The fine is waived because of the substantial restitution and forfeiture obligations.

Mr. Galanis, you have the right to appeal the sentence

I've imposed. If you cannot afford the cost of an appeal, you may apply for leave to appeal as a poor person. The time limits for filing a notice of appeal are brief and they are strictly enforced. If you request, the Clerk of Court will prepare and file a notice of appeal immediately.

Do you understand all that?

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THE DEFENDANT: I do, your Honor.

THE COURT: Please be seated.

Anything further from the government?

MS. HECTOR: Only that we would ask that any open counts be dismissed at this time.

THE COURT: Without objection, that is granted.

Mr. Brass, any application?

MR. BRASS: No, your Honor.

THE COURT: How about place of incarceration?

MR. BRASS: Western region, your Honor.

THE COURT: I will recommend that he be housed as close to Los Angeles as is feasible to facilitate family visitation.

Mr. Galanis, you have a job to do. You have to get things straight in your own mind. If you have bipolar disorder, you should be evaluated for that. In fact, I am

going to recommend that he be evaluated by the Bureau of Prisons for appropriate mental health treatment. You have to figure out what you're going to do with the rest of your life and how you're going to live a law-abiding life. I wish you the best in that endeavor.

MR. BRASS: Thank you, your Honor.

THE COURT: We are adjourned.